

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 8 JANUARY 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You can tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English on HF and on many VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. Echolink listeners can connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League's web site.

This audio bulletin can be downloaded from the League's website at www.sarl.org.za. You will find this bulletin and previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you can sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

In the news today,

A CALL FOR MOTIONS FOR THE 2017 AGM AND COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

RADIO AMATEUR EXAMINATION DETAILS FOR 2017

and

THE PEARS NATIONAL VHF AND UHF CONTEST

Stay tuned for more on these and other interesting news items.

** In terms of Rule 11.3 of the Constitution and Rules of the League, a call is made to members to submit motions to be discussed at the 2017 Annual General Meeting. Motions should be clear, concise, include a motivation and require a proposer and a seconder.

In terms of Rule 16.9 of the Constitution and Rules of the League, a call is made to members for nominations to serve on the Council of the League. Five of the present Councillors will retire at the 2017 AGM, but can be re-elected if nominated and seconded. The names of the five Councillors retiring will be made known following the Council meeting on 17 January. The requirements are a nomination form signed either by 10 seconders who are all members of the League or by a Club of which at least 10 members are also members of the League.

The closing date for nominations and submission of motions is on or before Tuesday 31 January 2017 and must be sent to the League Secretary at secretary@sarl.org.za or by fax to 086 552 8487. For more information, please refer to the League Constitution and Rules, which is available on www.sarl.org.za.

** Members and Clubs are invited to submit nominations for the following South African Radio League awards. Send your nominations with a motivation to the League Secretary at secretary@sarl.org.za on or before Tuesday 31 January 2017.

The awards are Honorary Life Membership; the Willie Wilson Gold Badge; the Jack Twine Award; the Arthur Hemsley 2 metre Trophy; the Barney Joel Trophy; the Icom Excellence Award; the Joseph White Plaque; the Bert Buckley Six Metre Trophy; the Radio ZS Four Metre Floating Trophy; the SAATI Award and the Tinus Lange 7066 Technical Excellence Award. The relevant information about each award can be found in the SARL Communication e-mail dated 11 December 2016 sent to all members.

** It is that time of year again when Clubs get ready to run RAE courses. This year sees a major change in the day of the examination. In the past, the exam was always written on Thursday evenings, but this year the RAE will be written on Saturday mornings starting from 10:00 to 13:00 Central African Time. This should make it easier for the candidates who cannot always make the exam, due to pressure of work. The RAE dates for 2017 are as follows:

First semester 21 January 2017 - RAE registration process opens 15 April 2017 - RAE registration closes 20 May 2017 - RAE examination (Saturday morning)

Second Semester 14 July 2017 - RAE registration process opens 16 September 2017 - RAE registration closes 21 October 2017 - RAE examination (Saturday morning)

An e-mail has been sent to the current list of Chief Invigilators of the respective Clubs, requesting them to update all their details and re-register before 20 January. Please note - the relevant Clubs' contact details and the exam centre locations are extremely important. This information is required before the RAE registration process can be opened. The link to the registration page is www.sarl.org.za/Web3/RAE/ExamCentreRegistration.aspx.

All HF Assessors are also required to update their details by re-registering at the following link - www.sarl.org.za/Web3/RAE/HFAssessorRegistration.aspx.

Candidates must register online and Clubs are requested to hand out the RAE Registration information sheet to all candidates. This can be downloaded at www.sarl.org.za/Web3/Documents/RAE_Registration_Information_Sheet.pdf

Please do not hesitate to contact the SARL RAE Manager on the following e-mail rae@sarl.org.za should you require further information. All this information was sent to affiliated Clubs on Tuesday 3 January by e-mail.

** RAE Bursaries for under 26 Year old students. The South African Amateur Radio Development Trust offers two bursary of R1 000 each for the May Radio Amateur Examination. The Tony Reumerman bursary programme awards four bursaries annually for students who are under 26 years old and are planning to write the Class A examination. Two bursaries are available for the May exam and two for the October exam. For more details and the application form, visit www.amateurradio.org.za.

** Join the SDR Conversation. AMSAT SA will resume its regular SDR conversation on Wednesday 11 January 2017. The concept is to share ideas and

experiences on Software Defined Radio and the conversation will take place via a Skype call starting at 20:30. To participate it is essential that the participant runs the latest version of Skype. To book your participation, send an e-mail to admin@amsatsa.org.za with your Skype name and mobile phone number by 10 January. Deon Coetzee, ZR1DE, moderates the discussion.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League. Did you tell anyone about amateur radio this week?

** The annual PEARS National VHF and UHF contest will take place over the weekend of 20 to 22 January 2017 and is open to all licensed amateurs in the RSA and the neighbouring states. The aim of a VHF and UHF contest is to stimulate activity on these bands, make many long distance contacts possible, establish new records, encourage the improvement of VHF and UHF equipment and advance amateur radio.

This is a 44-hour dual contest for analogue and digital modes, which is divided into 2 sessions that will spread out activity over the contest period and reflect changes of propagation. So watch out for Tropo Ducting or Meteor Scatter in the early mornings or at night on 50 and 144 MHz, while in the daytime look out for Rover stations, Aircraft scatter and possibly Sporadic-E. This is also a wonderful camping period with lots of fun for field stations. Amateurs are requested to participate in both the contests and keep the bands alive.

The first 22-hour session of the VHF and UHF contest starts at 16:00 UTC on Friday 20 January and closes at 14:00 UTC on Saturday afternoon 21 January. The second 22-hour session commences immediately after 14:00 UTC on Saturday and ends at 12:00 UTC on Sunday 22 January 2017. Get all the details in the 2017 Blue Book, available from www.sarl.org.za or on page 31 of the January 2017 issue of Radio ZS.

** The Editor of Radio ZS requests members to assist him in awarding two of the Radio ZS awards for the 12 issues of the 2016 series of the magazine. The first is the Gary Immelman RA Heritage Award Floating Trophy for the best article of a historic nature describing an event that occurred more than five years previously or an interesting personality that has played an important part in the development of Amateur Radio in years gone by. The second is the JJ Pienaar Trophy for the best article published in Radio ZS during 2016.

E-mail your suggestions as to who would be worthy recipients to radiozs@sarl.org.za by Tuesday 31 January 2017.

** Turn your laptop into a 24 MHz to 1,7 GHz receiver. AMSAT SA is holding a half-day SDR Workshop in association with the South African Radio League at the NARC on 18 February 2017. This is a hands-on workshop where participants will install a VHF/UHF RTL dongle and programme it to become a VHF/UHF receiver covering 24 MHz to 1,7 GHz. Anton Janovsky, ZR6AIC, and Cor Rademeyer, ZS6CR, will present the Workshop. The Workshop fee includes the RTL dongle and a memory stick with all the required software as well as light

refreshments. Register before 11 February 2017, all the details and registration form are available on www.amsatsa.org.za. Book early to avoid disappointment.

** The 2017 AMSAT SA Space Conference will be held on Saturday 20 May 2017 in Pretoria. This is the first call for paper proposals. The theme of the conference is "Conquering Space as an educational pastime." Proposals for papers should include a brief synopsis of the proposed paper. The closing date for proposals is 31 January 2017. Authors will be notified of acceptance of their paper by 15 February 2017. More details on www.amsatsa.org.za

** There were strong sporadic-E openings on New Year's Day. Andrew Gray, ZS2G, at Port Elizabeth was the first to report the Sporadic-E opening on 1 January 2017 when he heard the ZS6TWB beacon on 50,044 MHz CW from Polokwane around 11:59 CAT.

Mike Kellett, ZS1TAF at Cape Town heard the ZS6TWB beacon for about 2 hours and it was first audible from about 12:30 CAT, while the ZS6JON beacon on 50,050 MHz CW was heard for almost an hour. During this period, Mike worked Servaas, ZS6SER, at Louis Trichardt, Willem, ZS6WAB, in Polokwane and Kenneth, ZS6KN, in Onderstepoort, on 50,200 MHz SSB at S9.

Pieter Jacobs, V51PJ, at Rosh Pinah reported that he first heard about an Es warning when the 11 metre band was open. He listened on 50,200 MHz and heard CW, voice and meteor pings with his beam in the direction of Polokwane. He changed frequency to 50,280 MHz and received a 57 MSK441 signal non-stop from Brad, ZS5BG, who was +13 dB on the screen. He changed to JT65a and hooked up with Brad in Pinetown, Hugo, ZS5HV, at Scottburgh and Lee, ZS5LEE, in Durban. It was interesting that Pieter was beaming NNE when he first heard Brad, but the Es cloud must have moved when they started operating on JT65a as they had to beam at each other. Bernie, ZS4TX, in Bloemfontein could not hear the Es signals, only meteor pings and thought that the skip distance was between 1 200 and 1 600 km at the time.

** Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There are currently no sunspots visible. No major solar flaring is expected. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be less than 5. The 15 to 30 m bands will provide lots of DX fun. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Now for the diary of events

11 January - the SDR Conversation 12 January the NARC opens for business 20 January RAE Invigilators and Venues to be re-registered 21 January May RAE registration process opens 20 to 22 January the PEARS National VHF/UHF Contest 31 January closing date for AGM motions, Council nominations, SARL Awards and Radio ZS awards; the closing date for proposals for papers for the AMSAT SA Conference 11 February closing date for the SDR Workshop registration 18 February the SDR Workshop at the NARC

To end this bulletin, a recap of our main news item this morning:

In terms of Rule 11.3 of the Constitution and Rules of the League, a call is made to members to submit motions to be discussed at the 2017 Annual General Meeting. Motions should be clear, concise, include a motivation and require a proposer and a seconder.

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** Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 4 895 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by ..

73 and 88, thank you for listening

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